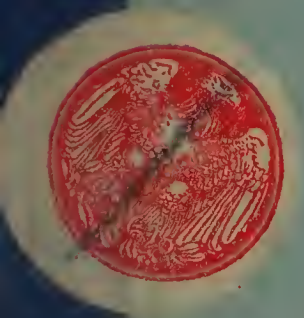



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**KATE**  
*and*  
*Other Poems*



SARAH MCKINNEY



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KATE



# KATE

*and Other Poems*

BY  
SARAH McKINNEY



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no. 1



With fondest love and a lifetime of  
appreciation, I offer these lines to my  
father and my mother. S. M.



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## Kate

SHE came as comes a breath of flowers in May.  
(Ah, well, I mind that beauteous summer  
day.)

She wafted from her finger-tips, a kiss—  
This unspoiled, care-free, little village miss,  
Whose feet had skipped through barely two score  
years;

Her eyes undimmed by aught of scorching tears,  
Looked into mine with roguish pent-up fun,  
As, laughing lightly, she exclaimed, “I’ve won!”  
And then she told me how she’d coaxed her  
father —

Alone, I fear me, to escape Kate’s bother —  
From rigid views to finally relent,  
And to her plans reluctantly consent,  
So Kate prepared with animated zest,  
To pay a visit to the talked-of West,

KATE, *and Other Poems*

That place unrivaled, 'twas said, by any other,  
The home of Gerald, Kate's handsome married  
brother.

In less than three weeks from that very day,  
She started West to visit Santa Fe.  
She waved a "good-bye," through the figured  
glass,  
As the coach she sat in passed the jolly mass,  
Of school-day friends who hated much to part  
With one whose place was warm in every heart.

A few weeks later a nice long letter came,  
Confirming all we'd heard of the West's storied  
fame,  
For its grand scenery and the balmy air,  
Which, Kate declared, was found no place but  
there.

She dearly loved her brother's pretty wife,  
The charming idol of Gerald's quiet life.  
She made their home a cozy place of rest —  
This girl he'd met and married in the West.  
But dearer yet was darling baby Ted,  
And oh, such cunning things he did and said!  
A beauty, too, with Gerald's eyes and hair,  
And Rose's pleasant, laughter-loving air.

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

She ended, then her praises being done,  
By saying she was having “heaps and heaps” of  
fun.

Each week brought with it, a long and breezy  
letter,  
And each one longer and ever sounding better,  
Nor did I realize how time did fly  
,’Til six months passed since I kissed Kate good-  
bye.

Then Mr. Martin received a loving note,  
That Gerald and his darling Rosie wrote,  
Begging that Kate might still prolong her stay,  
And though he wished, he did not answer,  
“Nay.”

At Christmas, Gerald gave a fancy ball,  
And ’mong the belles, Kate Martin led them all,  
Then how her letters would ring with lively chaff,  
Which always caused us to indulge a laugh.  
But by and by it seemed I could detect,  
That somehow, all her merriment was rudely  
checked,  
And something very much like silent pain  
Would show all through her letters now and  
then,

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

I feared me, she had grown for home to pine —  
Had learned New Mexico was not “so very fine,”  
Yet, why these moods, I could not well suppose,  
For surely she could leave whene’er she chose.  
A year soon passed as is the case in youth  
When hearts are filled with naught but trusting  
truth.

Once young and thoughtless, living but the day,  
She now, alone, was treading life’s rough way.  
But soon — a letter came — a pouring out of  
grief —

But sorrow cut my darling’s missive brief.  
“Poor Gerald is heart-broken,” so it ran;  
“The very picture of a stricken man.  
His Rose, the flower he most does prize,  
Is fading daily, dying ’neath his eyes.  
The doctors say she cannot hope to live;  
With Autumn’s leaves, her life to God must  
give.”

The letter ended with the best and most  
Condensed in lady’s always added post —  
“For you alone — no other eyes to see —  
My next and most important note shall be.  
For weeks, I’ve prayed and thought, and pond-  
ered well,  
If my own story I should also tell,



KATE, *and Other Poems*

And so to you, my dear and trusted friend,  
The story of my double grief, I send.

. . . . .

“My dearest friend, my confidant, my Jo,  
The trust I give you, you will keep, I know,  
I have no one my grief — and joy — to share,  
(Poor Gerald is so weighted with *his* grief and  
care)

For Rose is passing like a dream, away,  
Yet grows more patient and resigned each day.  
With half her patience I should be content  
And the sorrow 'round me I should not resent,  
But as it is, oh, Jo, that you were here  
To make me stronger with a word of cheer!  
One night before the lights were brought,  
Rose sat beside me and her hand sought  
Mine, in loving pressure, as she said to me,  
'Dear sister, and yet more to be —  
A mother to my precious little babes, I ask,  
Dear one, that you perform the loving task,  
I shall not long be here to watch and guide,  
My little darlings, my maternal pride.  
My husband is a noble man, and kind;  
One with a great and loving heart and mind.  
His grief will be unbounded and sincere,

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

When first he learns his help-meet is not here,  
And years may pass ere he will be resigned,  
Or learn the secret which we all must find,  
Before a sorrow we can learn to bear,  
With patience and a passing by of care.  
I ask, dear Katherine, a promise from you now,  
A sincere promise, a solemn, earnest vow  
That you will stay and try to make his home  
Less gloomy and forsaken when I'm gone.'

"So, sitting there, the twilight turned to night,  
And Satan struggled in my heart with Right.  
It was so hard to say, 'I will be good  
And do my duty as I know I should.'  
For lately, Jo, my heart has found its mate,  
A fine, clean man who loves your wayward Kate.  
You will remember how, some months ago,  
I wrote so cheery and was all aglow  
About a picnic of the previous day,  
And then continued in my gushing way,  
To tell you how — a horrid bore for me —  
I spent the evening with a grave M. D.  
A man who bears himself with stately grace,  
And shows his calling in his noble face,  
Not handsome, but an honest, upright look,  
Betrays his virtues, as an open book.

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

His face is dark and so his eyes and hair,  
With threads of silver sprinkled here and there.  
His figure, tall and dignified — austere —  
Commands respect, and, at the same time, fear.

“I met him often and all unaware  
I found, too late, that I had learned to care,  
As only those of loving nature can,  
For him, the grave, authentic learned man  
Of science; he had come one evening — just at  
close of day,  
(Short time before I had agreed to stay)  
And I remarked in pleased and happy way,  
‘I leave for home, just one week from today.’  
He started slightly, rose as if to go,  
Turned facing me and said, while standing so,  
‘Miss Martin — Kate — the truth you now must  
know.

Though I have kept my secret all my own,  
It seems to me you surely must have known  
By intuition, look, or other sign,  
Your life has grown to be a part of mine.  
I have not dared to think the tender flame  
Has stirred your heart at mention of my name,  
As has your own plain title, dearest Kate,  
Caused my true heart with love to verberate.

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

I have kept silent knowing how unfair,  
'Twould be, to ask of you a larger share  
Of love, than that which you would give a friend,  
And I have tried to think my love for you would  
end

With your departure. For, argued I, while  
older than her years,

'Tis folly e'en to reason down my fears;  
She is so heart-free, careless, and so gay,  
She thinks of me as being old and gray.

Yet often in the quiet would I start  
From dreams of home wherein you played a  
part —

The part that ever has been woman's sphere,  
Disbursing comfort with her loving cheer.  
And so, just now, at mention of your home,  
My heart rose up, with love, to claim its own.  
The home where I have pictured you as queen,  
Awaits your coming there to reign supreme.  
The throne upon which you can ever prove  
Yourself a queen, is my protecting love.'  
Still standing there, his eyes with love aglow,  
He ended thus: 'My love, you cannot know  
How much your answer bears upon my life.  
I ask you plainly, Will you be my wife?'

KATE, *and Other Poems*

“I knew it, Jo, though I had not before  
Imagined such a treasure was in store  
For me. Ah yes, I knew it. Without one con-  
cession

This man, so quiet, had the full possession  
Of my heart. And yet, despite my longing to  
say, ‘Yes,’

The very love I bore him did suppress  
My words. I could not speak but merely dropped  
my head,

The while he took my hand in his and said,  
‘I see, my dear, within your downcast eye,  
The very love which you would fain deny.  
Is it not so?’ ‘No,’ answered I, ‘although my  
voice was low,

My lips were dumb — because I love you so.’

“I’ve wondered since, if I may ever know  
Another moment when my heart shall glow  
With greater pleasure than was then my share,  
While standing, sheltered from the bright lights’  
glare,

He clasped me gently and with loving tone,  
Breathed in my ear, those cherished words, ‘My  
own.’



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

“I need not tell you how we sat and planned,  
Nor how his sincere words of love e’er fanned  
That kindred flame that caused my heart to ring  
With echoes of the praises of its king.  
He spoke so nobly of his love, yet claimed  
Himself unworthy of the prize he’d gained  
In my return of confidence and trust.  
He would not listen to my condemnation  
Of my own faults, but said the integration  
Of his soul was mine.

“My dear friend, I have been so glad  
To tell you this and ease my sad  
Sore mind. For troubles greater than e’en you  
    can know,  
Have closed around me as the waters, Jo.  
I want your counsel and your friend’s advice —  
For no friend is true until he pays the price  
Of friendship, by his help and aid  
In some such case as I have just conveyed  
To you. A friend, to be a friend in every phase,  
Must surely criticise as well as praise.  
I beg you, dear one, help me to the right,  
For sometimes, dear, it seems I cannot fight  
The tempter, but needs must yield  
Myself to love and the protecting shield,

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Of a great mind. But by my honor it can never  
be

Since on that evening when Rose asked of me  
My care, in love for her and for my sorrowed  
brother,

All else was wanting and the thought of other  
Promise did not stay my pledge.

I vowed to stay and lend my feeble aid  
So long as Gerald needs it, and I said,  
'Before my God, who knows our griefs and joys,  
I promise, Rose, to rear your precious boys  
As you would wish I should;'

I pondered long on how to make it known  
To one whose coming I had justly grown  
To look for daily, as the only ray  
Of sunshine shed along our gloomy way.

. . . . .

"He came next evening and at once detected  
The troubled spirit that my face reflected.  
I told him all. He was as one demented  
And would not credit I had thus consented,  
To take upon myself the place of mother  
To the little ones, and for my darling brother  
Try to make a home.  
He begged me then, the pledges to recall.

## KATE, and Other Poems

He pictured how these cares, that are not small  
Would weigh upon me.

'Twas selfish e'en to have a single thought,  
Of my own pleasure or of doing aught  
Save duty.

"But *then*, the home, the love was all the more,  
A sore temptation than was it e'er before.  
Pleasures attend the attentions, fondness and  
cares of the lover,  
But blessings will e'er greet the person who dares  
to be strong for another.

I listened to his words yet still stood firm;  
My promise given, I would not dare to turn  
From those who need my care and consolation,  
Nor would I hear to any mitigation  
Of my vows.

"The doctor knew that I would soon be asked  
To fulfill my promise and perform my task.  
He reasoned first, and when he found no word  
He said could change me, with incense averred  
I did not love him; said I had no thought  
Of him or his o'er-burdened lonely lot;  
I tried to reason, pacify, explain.  
He would not listen — my attempts were vain.



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

With ill-concealed and growing indignation,  
He re-asserted that no expiation  
Of future years could mend the breach, or prove  
I was not false to his devoted love.

“And so he left me with the bitter dart  
To keep its vigil in my sorrowed heart.  
I have not seen him since, nor even heard,  
(Though I expected to receive some word,  
When he should think o’er his unkind assertion,  
And o’er his thoughtless, undeserved desertion  
Of me in my hour of trial.)

“Rose, wondering at his absence, asked me why  
For days ago he had not come anigh.  
I did not wish to wound her with the truth,  
So laughingly replied, ‘Forsooth,  
The doctor has, in paying off his calls,  
Found some fair maid whose charming way en-  
thralls  
Him more than do the ways of me!  
But, jest aside, and speaking seriously,  
I, too, have wondered why he does not come  
To make inquiries, or send someone  
To ask about you.’  
This remiss position

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Eradicated Rose's faint suspicion,  
That the doctor's absence could be charged to me.

. . . . .

"Dear Jo, I know that I shall grow resigned  
To God's volition and shall shortly find  
A pleasure in my work and mission here.  
But you must help me with your letters, dear,  
I know, good friend, that you will feel for me,  
On reading this, a ready sympathy.  
Please write at length expressing all you feel—  
Your love—your censure—or your friendly zeal  
In this, my story.

"It is growing late,  
And you are tiring of your loving — Kate."

. . . . .

Long hours I sat and pondered o'er her letter,  
Argued for and then against her cause.  
Condemned my friend's reception of the fetter  
Then urged, "It is fulfilling God's own laws."  
And so I found myself the first time dreading  
To write to one whose love and fond affection  
Has been to me a ray of sunshine spreading  
Backward through my earliest recollection.

KATE, *and Other Poems*

I knew not what to say, what word to offer,  
What counsel give, what trials mitigate;  
My love undying — my sympathy to proffer,  
'Twere little hope that such could animate  
My friend to feel her trials lighter, so I wrote:

. . . . .

“Your letter, welcome always, always new,  
Has caused me grief and mixed my joy with  
    pain.

What can I do to help you, friend of childhood,  
Save tell my sympathies? And that were vain,  
So certain are you of my love and pity  
In this great grief that has become your cross,  
But dear, your life will be the better for it;  
These trials will sift the perfect from the dross,  
And bye and bye, with prayer and abnegation,  
This awful grief will mellow to a calm  
Still longing, as the keenest expectation  
Will spend itself and fade into a dream.  
The things we want, acquired, lose half their  
    value,  
And promised joys oft' prove not what they  
    seem.

I know your tender heart is crushed and bleed-  
    ing,

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Your spirit dampened by this cruel stroke,  
Coming so close upon your other troubles  
And finding you already ill beneath the yoke  
Of a great sorrow dealt by Hands, Almighty,  
A trial of your love, in trouble's hour,  
Of One whose ways mysterious and mighty  
We needs accept as tokens of a power  
Supreme and infinite.  
And this same grief that comes from Heaven  
    upon you,  
But shows the plainer to us, day by day,  
That God, in all His majesty and splendor,  
E'er thinks of us, faint strugglers on Life's way,  
And wants us there, with Him, to live in glory,  
Partakers of a Better World's pure pleasures,  
Else why the crosses sent to make us better,  
And stronger-minded, fit to share the treasures  
Of the spirit's praising God in all His goodness  
And singing hymns of grand, harmonic measures.  
I know, dear one, these words have little in them  
To comfort you or soothe your saddened heart.  
The only solace you may garner from them  
Is in the loving care which they impart  
For one who feels for you in every struggle,  
And gladly would, if such could only be,  
Shoulder the cross which bears upon your frailty

KATE, *and Other Poems*

And leave you as I saw you last, care-free ;  
Be faithful, dear, and God will surely comfort.  
Go to Him, often on the wings of prayer ;  
From Him alone, can peace of mind environ,  
'Tis He alone, will every burden share.  
Once more, loved friend, be brave, be prayerful  
    ever,  
Your little ones' pure love will help you grow  
More patient, more resigned to Fate's volition,  
And bye and bye you will have learned to know  
The treasure of a little child's affection,  
Now write at length, and often to —  
                                Your Jo."

I did not tell her of my indignation  
Toward him whose obstinate and wilful way  
Had brought this madd'ning grief to one whose  
    nature  
Kind and loving, was unable in its weakness to  
    defray  
The trials of life.  
I felt for him, big, strong, self-centered creature,  
A feeling, near in purport to contempt.  
To thus abandon one he had professed to love  
    and cherish.  
I felt the man exempt



## KATE, and Other Poems

Of those rare virtues which Kate needed most:  
A master to depend on, generous host,  
To all her frailties.

When first her letter, full of love and pathos  
I read with mingled pity and chagrin,  
A firm resolve I made to write her *my* opinion,  
Of anyone whose selfish greed to win,  
Could so o'ercome him.

But after I had yielded up to Somnus,  
Fair god who clears the over-burdened mind,  
I knew 'twere best, for friendship's sake, to  
smother,

Such words of censure as my soul might find  
As tributes to the man she chose to love.  
And so I wrote no words save those of pity,  
Knowing full well that Love is blind to faults,  
And friendship's tie, once it is strained and  
shaken,

Grows weaker 'til at last it rudely halts,  
And plighted hearts are sundered evermore.

. . . . .

Two years Kate's senior, most persons judged me  
five,  
So delicate and dainty and so much alive  
To social pleasures was she.

KATE, and Other Poems

Parties and the dance

Made up a goodly portion of *her* life, but Chance  
Or Fate had made me vigorous and strong,  
The gay frivolities of life were like a song  
From some stray bird, or like a pretty flower,  
So fleeting seemed they to me, from the hour  
Of leaving school, almost, compelled  
To earn a livelihood.

My parents, humble always, having naught of  
wealth,

Had trained me early to depend on self.

And so when Death, grim visor from Above,  
Heedless of moans from souls afull with love,  
Came like a thief in darkest hour of night,  
And took a father from us, all the might,  
Within my being, needs must be amassed,  
And all the care-free pleasures of the past  
Be buried, for my mother, never strong, now  
stricken sore

With this new grief, I knew would evermore  
Be my constant care.

To be a teacher long had been my aim  
And so when melancholic Autumn came,  
I found a solace in my work as such,  
And through my pedagogy kept in touch  
With child life and its countless little joys,

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

Thus sharing in the love of all my girls and boys.  
Thus facing cares and toil with grim defiance,  
Each day I grew more firm in self-reliance,  
Whilst Kate, unburdened by a single care  
Seemed to me, like a blossom, frail and fair,  
To be protected from the faintest blast  
Of withering sorrow.

The rare companionship between us two  
Evoked surprise among the ones who knew  
The difference 'twixt us both in taste and station,  
But the love we shared had no unsound founda-  
tion,

Built in shallow sands of worldly commendation.  
The slightest shadow o'er her pathway cast,  
She came to me, relying first and last,  
On my superior strength and loving care,  
Knowing full well that I would gladly share  
Her every sorrow.

And now when monster, Grief,  
Real and rigid, came, in her belief,  
In my sincerest counsel and advice,  
She came and with her trust had paid the price  
Of years of loving friendship and kind care.

. . . . .

My letter gone, I could do naught but wait,



KATE, *and Other Poems*

And count the days 'til I should hear from Kate,  
And learn from her own writing how she bore  
The strain her faith had never borne before.  
I half expected she would write to say  
Her hero's anger had all passed away  
And they were happy as two hearts could be  
With one they loved so near Eternity,  
And with the brother stricken full of pain,  
Feeling his loss ere Death had come to claim,  
And gather in his stern relentless arm  
The one whose love and virtue-prompted charm  
Had made his house a home and filled his days  
With peace and comfort.

. . . . .

But moments grew apace, as moments will,  
Stretched into days, then weeks, and silence still;  
Four weeks I spent with anxious longing fraught,  
Impatient for a letter telling aught  
Of what my heart's best friend was undergoing,  
Yet dreading such a letter, well nigh knowing  
The message it would bear would be of death,  
Remote from none, save by a single breath,  
Yet always seeming nearer one whose form  
Is spent with suffering.  
The father old

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

And feeble from long years of wretched health,  
Had missed his winsome daughter and her wealth  
Of love, and so, had left the old home, though  
    with tears,  
To spend with son and daughter, his declining  
    years.

. . . . .

Still days passed on. Then came a loving note  
To bear the tidings, Katherine darling, wrote.  
Before she found the heart to pen a letter,  
Full of grand and noble thoughts, yea, reading  
    better,  
Than e'er had come from pen of hers before.  
How sorrow moulds the mind and fits the soul  
To grander things, and makes a perfect whole  
Of what was once but a defective brain,  
Lacking the cast it never can attain  
Save by the true-designing Hand of Love,  
Born not of earthly things, but in the great  
    Above,  
Attaining birth, and by its softening power,  
So mellowing the heart that every hour  
It grows more plastic 'neath the chastening rod,  
Of sorrows great, and to the will of God,  
Becomes more pliant.

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

A letter followed then, from which I learned,  
That Rose had drifted to the Great Beyond  
As peacefully as Autumn's day is turned  
To twilight. Not a fear nor care  
Disturbed her closing hours,  
So certain was she of the generous share  
Of Gerald's grief which Kate would help to bear.  
Surrounded by the ones to her most dear,  
And knowing well the parting hour was nigh,  
Her hand sought that of Gerald, kneeling near,  
And with a feeble pressure did she try  
To speak her love and faith, then with a prayer  
But faintly murmured in an undertone,  
She closed her eyes, and loved ones standing  
there,  
Knew that the bridegroom, Death, had claimed  
his own.  
Beneath the rustic shade where, as a sweetheart,  
She first had dreamed and later on was wooed,  
They laid her down to rest beneath the cedars  
That she had loved, as she had wished they  
should.

. . . . .

How lonesome seemed the house, how full of  
shadows;

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

Turn where you might, some memory lingered  
there.

The husband roamed the rooms as one demented  
And e'en the little boys seemed to miss the care  
Of the fond mother, ever full of pity  
For childish ills, and seeming ne'er so glad  
As when engaged in some new plan or labor  
Designed to please or educate the lad,  
So like the father, both in act and feature,  
A pleasing thought to her who gave him birth,  
So near akin to worship was her feeling  
For him whose generous heart and manly worth  
Were better known to her than any other.

. . . . .

The father missed the old familiar faces;  
The home so long his haven now was gone,  
The forms he loved no longer filled their places  
And Gerald's home seemed scarce a home to him,  
So Kate must try his last few days to cheer,  
Must help her brother bear his sorrow better,  
Must be a mother to the babies dear,  
Must put her own distress aside for duty,  
And by the household cares and labors new,  
Absolve herself from stern and vain repinings,  
Thus showing what a perfect faith can do.

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

She wrote again to tell me how she managed,  
And planned her work, and how she daily grew  
More fond of both her little orphaned charges,  
How Gerald's sorrow opened up anew  
At every word the little boys would utter,  
In lonesome longing for the mother true.  
And then at last, she gave the news, depressing,  
That I detected long had filled her heart;  
The doctor had not called through all their  
troubles,  
And rumor had it that he soon would part  
From friends whose numbers were by no means  
few,  
To link his life with others strong and brave  
Whose swords were winning laurels for their  
country,  
Afar from home, across the ocean's wave,  
In suffering Cuba.  
The war in which two nations plunged so quickly,  
Had just begun and with each coming day  
New companies were springing into being,  
Each anxious for a sharing in the fray.  
These volunteers, so eager and so lusty,  
Were representing, though without design,  
The best our country has of manly vigor,  
And mothers, wives and sweethearts must resign



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

Themselves to thoughts of war and all its horrors.

. . . . .

No wife, no mother grieved in anxious silence  
O'er him, who full of unjust indignation,  
Had given up his work so full of promise,  
And left his friends in wondering consternation.  
Ah, no, not wife's nor mother's tears were mingled,  
But left alone, no farewell word to cheer,  
The sweetheart, true, through every inattention,  
Would suffer on and wait from year to year,  
For one whose safety and aggrandizement,  
Were subjects of a daily — hourly prayer.  
His happiness would mean such satisfaction  
To her whose generous heart would ever wear  
As precious jewels, treasured 'bove all others,  
The words of love he once had planted there.

. . . . .

As some volcanic mountain still for ages,  
Springs into action in a single night,  
So man, unknown, to Fame and all her glories,  
By some bold stroke, displaying valorous might,  
Leaps into public favor; and her graces,

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Fame, fortune, future prospects, gleaming bright,  
Are his, nor can he stay the grand applause,  
Of press and public favor.

By daring dash and dextrous exploitation,  
Lieutenant Hobson tried to block the bay,  
And Dewey, sailing swift from distant China,  
Performed his wondrous work and gained the  
day.

Unheard of places rose to public notice,  
In but a day, and gained a history's page;  
El Caney, San Juan Hill, and Morro Castle,  
In isolation once, did now engage  
The best attention of a breathless world.

- But two short months the country waged its war-  
fare,

When Spain, unable long to bear the stroke  
Of well-equipped battle-ship and soldier,  
Succumbed, and from her dream of victory woke,  
To find her reign in struggling Cuba over.  
The troops came home, the war talk ceased to  
interest,

And quiet reigned once more on every hand.  
A peace as of a calm, cool day in Autumn  
Was brooding like a spirit o'er the land;

KATE, *and Other Poems*

But he, for whom sweet prayers were daily  
offered,  
Remained, a stranger on a foreign shore.  
Nor word, nor sigh, came home to greet the  
waiting,  
True, e'en through life, to death and evermore.

. . . . .

The months rolled on. Three years had passed,  
And summer, with all her lustrous beauty bright  
and gay,  
Had come again to sprinkle Earth with gladness,  
And hide the barren boughs away from sight,  
'Mong verdant leaves.  
With Summer's early coming,  
My heart had sung a song of love and joy,  
For he, the hero of my dreams and visions,  
Had come to find me waiting, glad but coy,  
At first, so sacred seemed the blessing,  
Of love from such a man, so strong, so good,  
So full of all that women like in lovers,  
Respect, and love, and masterful command.  
Sometimes, in silent wondering admiration  
Of brawny strength and lithesome execution,  
I wondered—could I bear to lose the treasure?  
Could future years of work be restitution



KATE, *and Other Poems*

For all that I should suffer by the loss?  
But thoughts like these were like a fleeting  
shadow

In the room.

So short lived were they, for my heart was happy  
And every bird seemed singing a sweet tune  
Of love.

I scarce knew how to write to one whose  
romance

Had ended in such direful variation,  
Of that which made my life so full of gladness,  
So fearful was I, of the laceration  
Which careless words might cause a tender heart,  
Still sore from a wound of slow recovery.  
And so without long dwelling on the joy  
That filled my soul with the discovery  
Of that which makes a restless life complete,  
I told her of the wedding we had planned for  
June,

The trip abroad — a splendid honeymoon,  
The little cottage waiting our return  
When I, with loving ardor there should learn  
The art of being many things combined,  
Maid, cook, companion, seamstress, all defined,  
In one word — housewife.

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Just on the morning of our wedding day,  
There came a greeting — a sweet note — to say  
She wished us peace — the best of Earthly treasure —

Long years of happiness in fullest measure;  
That all were well and busy, too, as bees,  
Finding in work, the longest hours of ease  
For aching hearts.

. . . . .

The trip we planned was through the sister  
states:

Brazil, Peru and Ecuador. The Fates,  
It seemed, had chosen for us well,  
Since stopping for a while in Guayaquil,  
A place of trust and good remuneration  
Was offered to my husband. Consummation  
Of the plans was early made. We hurried back,  
To fetch the little mother and to pack  
The household things our little house would need.

. . . . .

The people and their customs, queer and new,  
Were for a time a source of much delight,  
And with my husband and my mother true,  
I was content 'til the accustomed sight

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

Grew common, as all pleasures surely wane,  
When lacking variation. When I fain  
Would have gone out in social life a fraction,  
I wakened to the fact that living thus  
In isolation, selfish satisfaction  
Had kept me stranger to the class of people  
With whom I might have cared to congregate,  
And I was lonesome for a woman friend.  
With poor excuse, I started in thus late  
To paying calls that should have long before  
Been made.  
I formed real friendships in the passing months  
And learned that anywhere one's path may lay,  
There good and kindly people we may find,  
If we but realize that our own way,  
While seeming best to us, may like all else,  
Be better for a change, and we must stay  
The word of criticism for the modes  
And habits of the people that we meet,  
Knowing full well that custom is a tyrant,  
And many a kindly heart with love doth beat  
Beneath a strangely rough and common mien.

. . . . .

The social life of that fair, Spanish city  
Was at its height, and we were near-dragged in

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

By friends of Jim—the counsel in his office—  
And so we found ourselves parts in the din,  
Of party, dance and dinner.

One evening in the home of Doctor Veraletto,  
We met a friend of his—a grave but pleasant  
man—

Of courtly bearing, with hair snow white,  
And tossed in rare abandon  
And eyes so blue they did oppose the tan  
Of his strong face.

He seemed to me a master among servants,  
Kind, e'en indulgent, but with such a "way,"  
As we of Hoosier birth do term that manner,  
Which charms, yet half repels, bespeaks  
"obey."

On many topics he was well conversant,  
And through the dinner hour he pleased the  
guests,

With lively tale as well as broadened subject,  
And brought the feast to close with lively jests  
About his host's reluctance to invite him,  
"Grim, crabbed, old recluse with no respect  
For folks of modern, civilized pretensions,  
But now," he added, "will you not reflect  
That I have borne myself with such demeanor,  
That e'en my faultless host cannot object."

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

So laughingly we rose, and on the wide veranda,  
Sought cooling breezes.

There myself I found beside this clever man of  
many phases,

Feeling so much at ease I did astound

Myself, by my assumption of the converse—

Yet an easy thing with one who listens well.

While all the other guests indulged in dancing,

We whiled the time with talking of the States.

He seemed so glad to know I was so recent,

A resident of Guayaquil.

“Your Hoosier dialect, it quite abates

That ‘stranger in a strange land’ feeling,” he  
declared.

Of Hoosier birth himself, we therefore shared

A love of fields and prairies green at home;

Time passed so quickly, ere I felt the hour

’Twas time for our adieux until the morrow

When we should meet again as guests within

The pleasant home of Jose Marlethin,

My husband’s friend and business coadjutor.

. . . . .

We grew to know him well, this Doctor Foster,

Our guest he often was at close of day,

And on an evening when in reminiscence,



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

I mentioned friends who live in Sante Fe,  
His fine face clouded as with pain supprest;  
He changed the subject quickly, so it seemed,  
Then left us early.

I wondered at the turn his mood had taken,  
Questioned myself how I had given offense,  
And when I asked my husband his opinion,  
He said, "My dear, 'twas not at your expense.  
The Doctor's change of spirit was apparent,  
But merely that your jolly little story  
Brought to his mind a mem'ry so intense  
As to disperse his happiness and spoil his day.  
I watched his face and such was my conclusion.  
'Twas just when you had mentioned Santa Fe,  
He grew distrait."

This set me thinking of Gerald and his babies,  
and of Kate.

So down the garden path we walked in silence,  
My thoughts ran on until they whipt my conscience—

How long it was since I had penned a letter  
To that dear friend who needed every solace—  
Brave little girl to bear so well her fetter,  
Tomorrow I should write to say I loved her  
In spite of my neglect—to tell her all  
About the happy life we led together—

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Our friend—our doctor friend, I would extol—  
What? *Our Doctor? Her Doctor!*

The thought flashed through my brain,  
With such asperity, I clutched my husband's  
arm,

Swung him around and said,

“Oh, Jim, the pain

That I gave Doctor Foster—

I would that I could render it again.”

He stopped so short I knew he thought me  
crazy.

“Why, Josephine—why Jo—what turn is this?

To hear you say that you would hurt a mortal

Must leave me think your mind has gone amiss.

Or does my dull, slow grasping sense of humor

Fail still to get the point of some keen joke?

Whatever caused your most surprising out-  
burst?

One reason for such statement I invoke.”

“Good man, your sense of humor be not duller

Than is your sense of reasoning, I fear.

Why should my talk of Santa Fe so casual,

Cause our late guest to suddenly appear

So distraight and so visibly disturbed?

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

Why, Jim, he knows that we hold Kate most  
dear ;

His quick mind pieced together bits of converse,  
As soon as I but mentioned Santa Fe.

And he has proved himself Kate's vagrant  
lover,

By the great haste in which he rushed away.

Vain, selfish and opinionated creature,

To crush a love and leave the wound to smart,

I hope that Life's consolidated bitter

Is gnawing at this moment, in his heart."

"Tut, tut!" said Great-heart Jim, "you do but  
utter

A superficial thing.

You are too good, too nobly good, my love,

To wish a fellow man such store of suffering.

Now ask forgiveness from the Great Above."

"I do," I cried, "of course, I did not mean it,

But for the moment at the thought of Kate,

The great respect that I have borne the doctor,

Seemed turned into an overwhelming hate."

"Well, we shall see what we shall see tomorrow,  
(I do believe your reasoning aright.)



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

But meantime we must hope and pray for  
guidance,  
That we may not go groping in the night,  
And so lose both our friends and this big chance  
To readjust the lives of both."

. . . . .

A week passed ere again we saw the doctor  
A week with anxious, thoughtful planning  
fraught,  
So fearful were we lest a word, ill-chosen,  
Should bring our fondly cherished hopes to  
naught,  
And he, the rash, impetuous man of science,  
Should once again make wanderlust his friend,  
Leave work, bright prospects, and in grim de-  
fiance  
Leave not a clue that we might try to end  
The fancied grief that he so long had nurtured,  
A grief grown keener as with care 'twas nursed,  
And so make effort toward a reconciliation,  
With her whose very name had thus inversed  
His kind relations with her closest friends.  
Oh, vain self-pity—virtue so misplaced,  
A selfish thing to occupy a heart  
Too big and sound at first to be disgraced,

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

By making you a guest, you stand apart  
From pity of a fellow creature's woe,  
And with each thought of real or fancied  
    grievance,  
And hope of retribution do you grow,  
Until your power, grossly demonstrated,  
Has dispossessed a throne by God created,  
With His intent and purpose inculcated.

. . . . .

On that first day that followed the detection,  
My Jim and I together, going o'er  
Some plan—its fitness—or the least objection  
Decided it were wise to wire Kate.  
We'd share the risk of both our friends' dis-  
    pleasure  
To make ourselves the masters of their fate.

“I need you badly. Can you come to me?”  
So read my message, nothing well defined,  
But circumstances fraught with misery  
Excused my hope that she would in it find  
Belief that some dire need had prompted me  
To urge her thus her friend's advice or care  
Bring with all haste o'er land and over sea,  
And with me any, *all* my sorrows share.

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

Reply came soon. "Leave Santa Fe tonight—  
Sail on the liner Lawrence. Be you brave."  
Yet filtered through with fear was my delight.

What could we do, the troubled day to save,  
By causing an indefinite delay  
Of plans we felt quite sure were being made.  
What thing could we devise to do or say  
That might postpone the doctor's parting day,  
Until our Kate arrived in Guayaquil?  
We were nigh crazed such was our agitation  
In going over one scheme, then another,  
And each one filled we found in expurgation,  
With flaws which he must readily discover,  
Until at last we came to an agreement,  
That only on his friendship could we hope  
To hinge the faintest faith in any suasion  
That with his biased pique could ever cope.  
To urge him on the strength of these relations  
Delay departure and again see Kate.  
So Jim agreed to that day seek a meeting  
And learn, at least, if we had been too late  
In reaching our resolves.  
With expedition,  
He called for Doctor Foster at his office;  
But there to learn he had made disposition

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

Of all professional affiliations  
Some days before.  
With business to curtail  
In Riobamba, he had hurried thither  
To close accounts and so be free to sail  
Upon the Presidente then in port.  
Jim hastened then to learn its date of sailing  
And what was his surprise you may conceive,  
To find the Lawrence booked for its arrival  
The very day the doctor's boat would leave.

The hours that followed tried our soul's en-  
durance,  
For harrowed were we with that stress of fear,  
That we had done a thing that courted danger  
To friendships that we both had held so dear.  
I think sometimes Jim's faith in our assuming  
This daring thing, was misplaced with regret;  
But not one word of this his kind lips uttered,  
But strove to ease my mind with doubts beset,  
By asking oft' of Doctor Veraletto  
For news of Doctor Foster. His return  
To Guayaquil we anxiously awaited  
That we might tell him frankly our concern  
For him and for our brave and steadfast friend.  
But no one knew when he should be expected;

KATE, *and Other Poems*

His boat and date of sailing seemed to be  
The only things of which his friends were cer-  
tain,  
So we could only wait the Lord's decree,  
With such of hope and courage as we shared.

. . . . .

The day before that set for Kate's arrival,  
I suffered from a headache, and a chill  
Brought on by "nerves" of which I'd thought  
I had none,  
Convinced dear Jim that I was really ill,  
And thus at his insistent way of urging,  
I kept that day in bed, and hoped that balm  
Of kindly sleep would bring relief and fitness  
To meet my friend, with my accustomed calm.  
But night came on without that longed for sur-  
cease,  
So I arose and opened wide the casement  
Upon a glorious sky. No moon appeared,  
But stars in myriads marked the day's efface-  
ment,  
And shone and twinkled on that calm still night,  
As must their light have shone in far Judea,  
To guide the wandering shepherds to the Right,



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

I thought of three whose faith in God could  
    lead them,

Upon a mission fraught with many cares,  
To still push on and bide with perseverance,  
The time which should award their ardent  
    prayers.

I knelt and prayed, "Oh God, I am so tortured,  
So much unable to know what is right  
To do in this stern test of love and friendship,  
The thought of being wrong—it does affright.  
It seems I cannot pray with that assurance  
That ever has been mine through all the years.  
Oh, God of peace, send calm upon my spirit,  
Give strength to me; allay my wanton fears.  
You know, dear Father, I would not give sorrow  
To her, whose life is patterned after You,  
Nor would I, now that I have thought more  
    sanely,

Give pain to him who loved that fairness too.  
Forgive me for my brief resentment toward  
    him.

What man can know the heart of fellow man?  
We are not all attuned with hearts harmonic,  
That were not 'ranged according to Your plan.  
So many lives have long been hard and selfish,  
To know, at last, what happiness can spring

KATE, *and Other Poems*

From sacrifice and self-emancipation.  
From hardest steel we strike the clearest ring.  
I ask but this: that I may cause no suffering,  
And that my efforts may not go astray,  
But with your Guiding Hand to lead me on-  
ward,  
I thus may face with confidence the day.”  
So prayed I on, until at last a comfort  
Stole o’er my soul and through my aching  
brain.  
I was aroused by Jim’s strong arm uplifting,  
And by the words he uttered in refrain,  
“My dear—my dear—my dear—how very fool-  
ish  
To thus expose yourself to others’ ills;  
Already sick, you should have long been sleep-  
ing;  
You’re cold enough to start again with chills.  
Now rest you well with faith in what the mor-  
row  
Shall bring. And should that not be in accord  
With your idea, or mine, of what should happen,  
We still shall know that all things with the  
Lord  
As guiding factor, must be as they should be.  
The keenest disappointments I have known



KATE, *and Other Poems*

Have later borne me fruit in rare abundance.  
Remember that my knowing you my own,  
Was but the outcome of my greatest failure—  
Had I succeeded in financing plans  
To build the bridge my dreams had often  
    builted,  
I should, before we met, have been in France.  
And so you see my grief was turned to glory—  
'Twas well by signal failure I was kept,  
In that old sleepy burg in Indiana.”  
He laughed and said, “Good-night,”—  
I turned and slept.

. . . . .

The day brought to me much relief from suffer-  
    ing,  
But left me weak and nervous from the strain  
Of mental anguish that had had its climax  
In hours spent in most intensive pain.  
Thus weak, I lay abed until the lunch hour—  
The boat should dock about the hour of two—  
And Jim should go alone to greet the coming  
Of her whom with our love we would imbue.  
While I was killing time at choice in dressing,  
I noticed that a pallor spread my face.  
E'en just one day of such indisposition

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Seemed to have left its mark as 'twere the trace  
Of weeks of illness,  
And I was glad of this, although deceptive,  
Since it would bear me witness to a need  
Of her dear presence and her careful nursing.  
The moments passed with all too little speed  
Until the clock chimed two.

I then arose—

No longer able to endure the agony  
Of voiceless rooms—and went to look for those  
Whose coming I could scarcely now await  
And yet the time with fear was so augmented  
It seemed as hours I walked the little garden  
And wondered if our friend could have pre-  
vented

A meeting any one who might have cared  
To urge upon him reasons why he should  
Stay on in Guayaquil where he was needed,  
And where his presence worked for so much  
good.

I stooped to train a vine the wind had loosened,  
Thus for a moment, looking from the street,  
So that I started up in perturbation,  
As on the graveled path the sound of feet  
Was near me.

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Jim stood quite alone, but smiling  
With re-assurance that his news was good.  
“Adown yon street, a sight for eyes unhealthy  
Come lovers, two, as you have wished they  
should.”  
He laughed. “Fair maid, and man, less fair,  
but happy,  
Forgot a third of what was first our party,  
And not too old as yet, nor dull of insight,  
To sense my welcome was not over hearty,  
I hastened on to one who loves my presence.”  
For just a moment I was quite unable  
To filter from his light words all the essence,  
Or import of the message they conveyed.  
I grasped his arm and shook him in excitement,  
Then, at the mystery my face betrayed,  
He hurried on to tell me how, awaiting  
The discharge from the boat, he had espied  
The doctor, near the gangway of the Lawrence,  
And scarcely breathed lest he should be de-  
scried,  
And, to avoid uncourted explanation,  
The doctor should make haste to move away.  
For, while Jim said he could not name a reason,  
He hoped most ardently to have him stay.  
In almost tense concern he watched the coming

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

Of passengers, and at the same time tried  
To keep an eye upon that silent figure,  
That unsuspecting stood close at his side.  
With near affright, he saw Kate coming toward  
him,

Then turned to watch that firm, but kindly face  
With wonder, as to how events should fashion  
Themselves, once he should certify a trace  
Of her whom he had tried to force from mem'ry.  
But scarcely time had Jim for rumination—  
The doctor saw her and his strong frame quiv-  
ered

As from a lash. He turned with agitation,  
Went but a step or two,  
Whirled quickly around,  
And walked to meet her, who all unaware  
Of his dear presence, turned her head in seeking  
For sight of Jim whom she expected there.  
She would have passed the doctor by, unnoticed,  
Had not his glad cry reached her—  
“Kate, oh Kate!”

That mellow voice she could not fail to cognize.  
She brushed her brow as to alleviate  
Some weird hallucination that had stopped her,  
But as she pressed on, he was at her side

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

With arms outstretched and face aglow with  
lovelight.

As though the harrowing years were all belied,  
She yielded to the arms that closed about her  
In eagerness that would not be denied.

A moment so they stood, then recollected  
That somewhere Jim must be awaiting Kate,  
And he, perceiving that they sought his presence

Went forward saying, "So a surrogate  
Have I in this, my very pleasant duty  
Of meeting, greeting and escorting home  
A lady fair. I do demand excuses  
Why I should yield a right I deemed my own."

The doctor laughed, then suddenly grew earnest.

"From years of gloom and darkness as of night,  
Through which I groped nor even hoped for  
better,

Mine eyes have opened on the morning light,  
And I have felt that blindness melt away  
Into the calm of an eternal day.

Before you understand, Jim, I must tell you  
A sad, sweet story of some years now gone,



KATE, *and Other Poems*

And shoulder, as I should, your rightful censure

That will not be the half you should pile on.

But let us seek out she who waits the coming  
Of those she loves and does appreciate,

I know your wife has long been most impatient  
For your return that she may welcome Kate."

Just then they came in sight, absorbed in converse,

They did not see us until I had cried,

"What sight is this that greets mine hungered  
optics?

Hail, vagrant swain, deliver at my side

This precious charge that you have stolen from  
me.

Think you my patience longer can abide?"

Kate ran across the flagstone drive so lightly

She seemed to me the same dear madcap maid,

That I had known those years ago, and treasured,

But now the tension that so long had stayed

The more intense emotions, broke in tumult

Of gushing tears and I bore her away

To rest and gain again her strength and courage,

To hear the things I scarce could wait to say.



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

She slept at last and I stole to the garden—  
Where Jim and Doctor Foster waited me—  
To hear again the tale of this strange meeting  
That God had wrought to set two spirits free.  
Again we heard from its inceptive being  
The story of the love between these two,  
And of the grievous time that saw its thwarting  
When stubborn man refused another's view.  
And all these years he still had felt injustice  
Had Katherine done him in her pledge to Rose,  
Although a love that would not be sequestered,  
Had fought the isolation that he chose.

“When I knew that you were friends of Kate  
and Gerald,  
I dared not stay. That fear of some day meet-  
ing—  
Howe'er remote the chances might appear—  
With her whom I believed had cruelly wronged  
me,  
Would soon or late have made my living here  
A constant harry. So I closed an offer  
That long before had come from friends in  
Irving  
To join them in a student's year in France.

KATE, *and Other Poems*

If miracle it were, 'twas Kate's deserving  
For years of faith and willing sacrifice.

“Today the first glimpse of those loved features  
Broke all the shackles of a selfish mind  
And something harsh and galling that had  
    bound me,  
Seemed rolled away and o'er me stole a kind  
And generous attitude to those about me.  
I realized that she to whom belong  
Those lips so kind and eyes so fair and guiltless,  
In choice of purposes could not be wrong.  
This reconstruction—may I call it so?—  
Of dreams that my unworthiness laid low  
Is such a sweet thing, yet so deeply sad  
That now when all my senses should be glad,  
I seem to bow to grief as ne'er before,  
And, counting my offenses o'er and o'er,  
I know that what I long for must not be,  
For 'twere not right that Kate should waste on  
    me,  
All undeserving, from my dire transgressing,  
The love a better man might count a blessing.”

“Foolish man,” I cried, “you'd be renewing  
The heartaches and the sorrows of the past

KATE, *and Other Poems*

To take an attitude like that. She feels—I  
know it—

That she has come into her own at last.  
Forgiveness is the basic part of loving—  
Then, if at an expression of regret,  
And humble promise to make reparation,  
She be not ready to forgive—forget—  
She is not what I knew and loved in childhood.  
So sure am I that she has not changed thus  
That I entreat you not again to wound  
A heart so long held servant to her willing  
Now bursting with this happiness, new-found.”

Just then a door opened and we started  
To see Kate coming toward us o’er the lawn,  
Her hair, loose coiled, like waves of burnished  
copper,  
Her eyes aglow with pleasure, and upon  
Her cheek the glow of freshly sweet rose petals.  
Her dress was white, and gay with frills and  
laces,  
The only touch of color that she wore,  
A lovely string of amber beads with spaces  
Of fine gold chain between each bead, and bear-  
ing

KATE, *and Other Poems*

A large gold locket. This, I later learned  
Had been his gift upon their pledge of love.

Fair as of yore, yet with a bearing earned  
By years of great self-sacrifice and care,  
For those about her—a sweet maturity  
That added to her charm and made more fair  
This friend of mine.

“Oh, Jo, forgive me—I had not till now  
Observed how ill you are—your face is gray.  
Why did you not send for me at the first  
Of your indisposition—let me pay  
In some small measure my great debt of love.  
'Tis strange your message came just at a time  
When I was contemplating such a trip.  
I had not written less my plans miscarry;  
But I had even started to equip  
Myself for travel, for events had shaped  
Themselves, that I might call my time my own  
And first of any pleasure to be courted,  
Must be a visit with you in your home.  
Rose had an older sister—Mrs. Mathew—  
Whose husband died some time in early fall  
And left her with no closer ties of kindred  
Than Rose's boys. None other could she call

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Upon for sympathy and for a hope of comfort.  
So Gerald had her come to share their nest,  
Thus giving me a chance to leave my dear ones  
And slip away for just a little rest.

So I had dreamed a dream of many pleasures  
That you and I should share as once we did,  
When arm in arm we wandered o'er the meadows

Of Indiana. Yet, I could not rid  
Myself of fear that Father so should miss me —  
He has so grieved for old friends that he left—  
But when your message came he quickly urged  
me

Come to you even tho' he be bereft  
Of much that helps him bear his lonely moments.

. . . . .  
“The boys have grown into my life so closely  
I dreaded leaving them. Their fond affection  
Has been to me a source of richest blessing—  
A precious gift that soon became protection  
Against a tendency to pity self.

. . . . .  
“But I was sure that Grace—their Auntie  
Mathew—



KATE, *and Other Poems*

Would welcome all the care and its reward,  
And find in it a comforting diversion  
As I had found it in the first discord  
That ever marred a life with purpose vain.  
To leave her in entire charge would please her,  
And take away the added sense of pain  
At being left dependent, as it were.

. . . . .

“So here I am,” she ended, laughing lightly,  
“All ready for the treat of bringing back  
The roses to your cheeks by careful nursing,  
And coaxing by my culinary knack  
An appetite that soon will need repressing.”

The while she talked, the doctor sat unmoving,  
His head dropped low, face resting in his hands,  
So like a child, I spoke to him reproving  
His gloomy aspect in a time of cheer.  
He raised his head and looked, with eyes of  
sorrow,

At Kate, then turned to me and sadly said,  
“To think upon my wrongs is but to borrow  
The keenest grief. I can’t recall the power  
To bear a tithe of all she bore so bravely,  
By my regret, expressed at this late hour,



KATE, *and Other Poems*

And in the years to come if I could carry  
All burdens, leaving her without a care,  
I still should feel forever sharp compunction,  
And, sharing in her love, should feel unfair.  
I know it seems a farcial thing to mention  
Unfairness, in the face of all the grief  
That bears true witness to my gross injustice.  
It would be hard to leave with you belief  
That I have always been of kindly judgment  
And fairest treatment to a fellow man  
Abhorring hardness as a thing unfitting  
With Christian manhood, which I hope I can  
Without deception delegate myself.

“For years, alone, and given but to study  
I had grown lonely as one well could be  
Until Kate came to fill my life so amply  
That e’en my soul lived in futurity,  
And all my thoughts were centered on that  
future  
That she would share with me, and dreams of  
home —  
A cozy little place where her dear presence  
Would anchor me from all desire to roam,  
Seemed all the goal that I could labor for.  
When Kate stood firm upon her brave decision

KATE, *and Other Poems*

It seemed I could not bear that she, so dear,  
Should sacrifice herself and spoil my vision  
Of such a home as we had planned to rear.  
I think I was insane from my bereavement,  
And all these years that since have dragged  
away,

I would not let myself a single moment  
Reflect upon the past, but lived each day  
Unto itself, nor dreamed that such reaction  
Should come upon me with but one fleet glance  
Of her whose will I now accept, unquestioned,  
E'en it be banishment without a chance  
At retribution.

But, bless her kindly heart, she spoke forgiveness  
At my first asking for it when we met  
This morning on the pier —  
Jim bears me witness —  
And that sweet moment I can ne'er forget."

He raised his eyes to Kate with love-light plead-  
ing.

She met his look with eyes that hope had bright-  
ened

And came to stand beside him, stroking lightly  
The wealth of hair that grief had thoro'ly  
whitened.

KATE, *and Other Poems*

“Dear one, my heart does treasure your confession

As great atonement for your one transgression.  
Love were not love that knows not full forgiving,  
And suffering fits us for a fuller living  
When joys do come.

My heart holds nothing bitter.

I hope the years have made me but the fitter,  
To bear the lesser griefs that time may carry  
With fortitude.

So short a time we tarry  
In this fair world—oh, much too short, indeed—  
To spoil a single day by sowing seed  
Of malice in the heart or harboring there  
Resentment of the sorrows and the care  
That we may know.

God fills each day

With too much good, and brightens up the way  
With too much love for us to e’er forget  
To thank Him, and to feel a keen regret  
For loss of sweets that we might well have had,  
Had not our own self-pity kept us sad,  
And missing much that could have made us glad.  
I do forgive (the little need there be),  
The old love lives in sweet entirety.

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

“I found so much to fill my life and heart —  
Dear baby-love, that played so rich a part  
In helping me — an aged father’s care —  
A brother’s tender love in which to share.  
But those were not enough to fill the void  
That entered when my duty there destroyed  
The hope of home and love — my very own!  
But one sweet thought, though it had stood alone,  
Gave satisfaction; just that I had given  
Rose comfort, in the hours when she was driven  
By mother-love, to ask that care of me  
For those she loved.  
Her rare simplicity  
Had kept her ignorant of that affection  
Which promised me so much of sweet protection.  
Yes, I am glad, indeed, that I can say  
She gave me trust which I did not betray.”

Her lover’s eyes had overflowed with tears  
As she had spoken of the trying years  
That she had spent in service freely given,  
And of the peace, for which she so had striven,  
That did reward acceptance of a duty,  
And gave her face those kindly lines of beauty.  
He spoke at last, “Love made me selfish, —  
God above must know how much I needed love —

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

And selfishness in turn, made my heart hard.  
I'd give my life, thus giving, could I prove  
How much I love you still and what remorse  
Tortures my soul.

Kate, could you give your life  
Into the keeping of so hard a man?  
Can you forgive enough to be my wife,  
And give me trust sufficient to believe  
That in the future years I shall atone,  
And from that darksome past at last retrieve  
Some nobleness of spirit? To condone  
My faults, I do not ask nor e'en expect of you,  
But only to allow my sins depart  
Into the dark oblivion of the past  
And let me share a corner of your heart.  
I do not ask that you should come to me  
In this far place and leave your loved ones there;  
But we shall go to them and make a home  
Which they must feel a welcome e'er to share.  
It was not that I did not love the boys —  
For I have ever loved a little child —  
But that I felt the task too hard for you,  
That with the burden of a home thus piled  
Upon your shoulders, I should be deprived  
Of your companionship.  
I want the boys



KATE, *and Other Poems*

To make their home with us and to allow  
That I should share with you, the cares and joys  
Of raising them."

Here, Kate broke in to say

The boys would no longer need her care,  
With Mrs. Mathew there to keep the home,  
And that no thought would Gerald ever bear,  
Of having them elsewhere than in the home with  
him,

But that her home must ever be her father's,  
Until the kindly hand of Sleep Eternal  
Had called him in from worldly cares and  
bothers

To where the gentle wife, these long years wait-  
ing,

And friends gone on before would sweetly greet  
him

And all the loneliness of these late years  
Would fall away as they should come to meet  
him.

. . . . .

"Then, Kate, my own beloved, you do mean  
That all the griefs and burdens stretched between  
Those happy days of yore and this fair day  
Have been forgiven freely — washed away



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

In the great anguish of my deep regret,  
And that you love me still and trust me yet.  
May I then, dare to hope the rest of life  
Will be thrice blest—that you will be my wife?”

“Would I not be most foolish,” she replied,  
“To turn away, when I have spent the years  
In longings, vain, and fraught with many tears,  
For this dear hour that brings you back to me  
To be mine own unto Eternity?  
I welcome your dear words of love today,  
As did I in the time long passed away.  
For my own peace, and for your dearer sake,  
I give you pledge that I will gladly take  
You back again, and bury deep the strife  
Of yesterdays — I hope to be your wife.”

Jim drew my arm through his as he proposed  
That we should think of dinner.  
Eager arms enclosed  
About her, and her precious head reposed  
In trust upon his breast.

## Do You Recall?

**H**AVE you seen a place where a long, steep  
hill

Leads down to a bridge, with a rustic air?  
Have you seen the winding stream flow by,  
Hedged in by the willows that flourished  
there?

Have you heard the rumbling train rush on—  
On past the station-house, grim and lone?  
Have you seen the moonlight steal and play  
Through the neighboring fields, with shrubs  
o'ergrown?

If you've seen all these you will understand  
How, long ago on a summer's eve',  
The lads and lassies, when work was over,  
Would wander there and stop to breathe  
The balmy fragrance of willow and elm,  
That was wafted by on the quiet breeze,  
Swept down the vale of the placid stream  
That wound its way through the maze of  
trees.

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

No wholesome game with its rustic charm,  
No new-formed plan of gay contest,  
But found support of the heartiest kind  
From the laughing girl who led the rest  
Of that merry crowd, once gathered there—  
Light-hearted girls and the bashful boys,  
All, all, care-free as the zephyr calm  
That carried naught but a wealth of joys.

Say, friend, have you seen that dark-eyed lad  
With the long dark hair in abundant masses?  
Have you seen those broad, square shoulders  
rear

In a manly pride that pleased the lasses?  
Have you seen the girl with the curling hair,  
That crept from the bow that held in place,  
And hung in careless ringlets 'round  
A plain but an ever smiling face?

Did you see that glance from the keen dark eye?  
Did you see the smile on the maiden lent?  
Did you hear the word, low-spoken, clear?  
Did you hear her breathe a glad assent?  
Then you saw the other boys and girls  
Stroll noisily down where the path inclined,  
And you saw those two still loiter where  
The hearts of each other they first divined.

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Then you mind that walk through the moon-  
light dim,

Across the bridge, up the long steep hill,  
And you fain recall the village bell

As its peals break forth on the evening still.

Do you fancy now you can see the place

Where these two parted, the first and last?

Do you think you could fancy if you tried

Those pledges of friendship, firm and fast?

Do you think you can call to mind that letter?

'Twas full of the beautiful things of youth.

And the letter that raced in swift reply,

Did you note it was full of contented truth?

Did you know 'twas the lad that broke the chain

And failed to write as the days went by?

And the maiden waited and waited in vain

For the mail that would bring reply.

Did you hear of the years that he spent abroad

And the honors he gained in his work pro-  
found?

Did you know how success crowned all his aims

As he mounted Fame's ladder, round by  
round?

Say, friend, have you guessed that with all his  
glory,

## KATE, *and Other Poems*

With all the praise of a critic world,  
With all the court of the fashioned people,  
With every banner of pomp unfurled,

A memory lingered and would not fade  
Of her who had laughed and jested there,  
Long years ago when hearts were young,  
And minds were free from a thought of care?  
A great strong lad shared that mem'ry too;  
It seemed 'twas a stranger he once had  
known—

Was the girl there yet? Was she still unwed?  
Ah, scarcely so, for the years had flown.

Did you hear how once when the day had  
flown—

'Twas long years after, and he was sad—  
He sat alone where the starlight gleamed,  
And his thoughts went back to the brown-  
eyed lad,

And the merry group of rustic youth,  
The brown old bridge, the calm stream's purl,  
The glimmering light from the semaphore,  
The quaint old village, the brown-haired girl?

Did you read the letter he wrote that night?  
It came from a heart o'er-full with love

KATE, *and Other Poems*

For the things which he could not understand—  
For his fellow-men, for his God above.  
He questioned why, in that peaceful calm,  
His thoughts had turned to the long ago  
With its phantoms bright and bearing peace,  
But he couldn't define what he did not know.



## Peace

WEARY, disheartened and care-worn,  
I longed for a place of rest,  
As I wandered the streets of a city  
Alive with the zeal and the zest  
Of mercurial bustle and striving,  
Scorched dry from the evening's sun's ray,  
Whose usually friendly brightness  
But heightened my sorrow that day.

I strolled up a street where a church stood—  
An edifice humble and small,  
With its cross held erect and commanding,  
As if 'twere no burden at all.  
And I thought, as my heart filled with longing,  
How testy I was in my losses,  
And I wished for the Grace to be kindly,  
And to stand up erect 'neath my crosses.

My steps turned mechanically forward;  
I passed up the steps to the door  
Ajar with a welcoming aspect—

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Ah, there was the box "For the poor."  
This coin in my hand held so lightly,  
May feed some poor creature for days,  
And the prayer of a suffering brother  
May lighten my burdensome ways.

At the foot of the crucified Savior,  
I knelt, and in humble submission  
Sent up from my heart, overflowing,  
A prayer full of ardent petition  
For Grace to be brave in Life's battles  
To fight 'gainst the tempter called Pride  
And to feel in each grief and each struggle,  
The hand of the Master who died,

That His loved ones who waited His calling  
Might share in the joys of His throne,  
And that He, when the summons were given,  
Might gather them in for His own.  
As I gazed with eyes moistened by sorrow  
At the head with sharp thorns closely  
crowned,  
I felt as grand benediction had fallen  
And circled me 'round.

I rose with heart gladdened and strengthened  
For trials that were hovering near,

KATE, *and Other Poems*

And I knew why the penitent sinner  
Had breathed out his life without fear.  
For a calm not of earthly assurance  
Had entered and filled all my soul,  
And the light of a Heavenly countenance  
Illumined my path to the goal.

Down the street once so lonely and foreign,  
With steps lighter far than before,  
I passed and in each busy creature,  
I saw not the stranger of yore,  
But a fellow-companion in duty,  
Whose heart was in touch with my own,  
And the smile which was late but a mock'ry  
To a bright inner picture had grown.

'Tis a wonderful thing when the heart aches  
O'er griefs which seem too great to bear,  
And the best that is in us seems dormant,  
And life seems o'er flowing with care,  
To turn for a moment from sorrow and pain  
To a vision of Love with harsh thorns 'mid  
the flowers,  
And watch for the cross which some tired  
brother bears  
To see there are troubles far greater than  
ours.

## Thanks

**T**EARS are fountains of the Spirit,  
Born of truth and shed for Love.  
And they soothe the heated passion  
Like the cooing of the dove.  
Like the raindrops, fresh from Heaven,  
Do they moisten foolish fears,  
Carry off the bitter anguish—  
Oh, we thank Thee, Lord, for tears.

Hearts that beat in fond remembrance,  
Steady, constant, ever true,  
Surge with love like God has given,  
Only to a chosen few.  
As the child, in love's affection,  
When from sleep, impulsive, starts,  
Flings its little arms around you—  
Lord, we thank Thee for true hearts.

Ambition moves the wheels of progress,  
Makes this world to seethe with life;  
Fills each heart with expectation,

KATE, *and Other Poems*

With firm purpose makes it rife.  
Brings the soul to God in Heaven,  
On the wings of love's petition;  
Fans to life the smouldering embers—  
Lord, we thank Thee for ambition.

Nature, fair and proud in splendor  
As she came from God's right hand,  
Teaches more by far, than science;  
Fills the hungry heart's demand.  
Kind and true and never changing,  
Giving lovers but one rule,  
Love and faith and true devotion—  
We thank Thee, Lord, for Nature's school.

Knowledge lends a power to Nature.  
God revealed unto man's mind  
Means of furthering his progress;  
Lent him instinct, more refined  
By laws of study, and developed  
By bereavement; evolved by success  
Of ancestry—Lord, we thank Thee  
For the knowledge we possess.

Sympathy, from love upspringing,  
Gives to souls with care awrack,

KATE, *and Other Poems*

Strength to better bear their sorrows,  
From their sad thoughts brings them back  
To the earthly joys that greet them  
In the friends from whom is heard  
Word of cheer—oh, Lord, we thank Thee  
For a sympathetic word.



## The Teacher

**H**ER hair was straight and her face was  
plain,

Her life was a common story;  
She had never done a single thing  
To carve out a name in glory.

Her nose was tilted, her eyes were brown,  
And her days were full of care;  
She had known no pleasure since early youth,  
Save the burdens of others to share.

Her hands were brown but soft and light,  
Her mouth was a trifle large;  
The only ones who its beauty knew  
Were the little ones in her charge.

Sometimes the spirit of mutiny rose  
And her heart grew heavy and sore;  
“Must I toil on without reward  
Of love, when I ask no more?

KATE, *and Other Poems*

“Must I be the one to struggle alone?  
I am tired of a strenuous life;  
I want a home to fill my heart,  
To be loved as a treasured wife.

“Must I be the one to spend my life  
In a sphere with toiling fraught?”  
But the voice of God from Heaven came  
And breathed, “Why not—why not?”

“My life was a life of sorrow,  
I suffered death for sin;  
Are you better than I, my daughter,  
Have you no reward to win?

“Go now, and shirk not thy duty,  
Toil on, though thy pleasures be few;  
Remember each day is a page of life;  
Child, I was a teacher, too.

“Each tender word of compassionate love  
To these brave little soldiers of mine,  
Will add to thy glory before the great Throne,  
And like stars in thy crown will they shine.”

KATE, *and Other Poems*

She turns from her dream to her duty again,  
And takes up the burden of teaching once  
more;  
She thrusts from her mind those fond visions of  
home,  
And plods on with love, and with care, as  
before.

Ah, when rest to this shepherdess comes at last,  
And the brown hands are folded from view,  
She will hear from a harp of melodious chord,  
“Child, I was a teacher, too.”

## Which?

**E**MMA, meek and lovely, madonna-like in  
grace,  
Fair and strong, no thought save those of love;  
Apart from things not born of Heaven above,  
Wearing a smile like halo 'round her face.

Julia, strong-minded, of all independent,  
Decided, determined, no changing her view;  
Firm, even to sternness, yet constant and true,  
In hatred as love equipoised and resplendent.

Angeline, graceful and queenly of bearing,  
Grand to behold and elaborately dressed,  
Bright like the noon-day and fond of all rest;  
Cares of tired mother and friend never sharing.

Maud, like a doll, with her tresses of golden,  
Pink baby face and blue eyes besetting;  
Clinging and loving when near, but forgetting,  
And fancying new friends instead of the olden.



KATE, *and Other Poems*

Catherine, brown-haired, with eyes full of sadness,  
Grieving in silence o'er each little care  
By which friends are burdened and willing to share  
With each lowly creature a heart full of gladness.

## Just One

**I**N conning o'er the faces and the forms I  
sadly miss,  
In thinking of the days gone by, when all was  
heedless bliss,  
The words that I remember were said in loving  
vein,  
The music that has soothed me with its euphe-  
mistic strain,  
The smile that fondly lingers through the ever  
length'ning years,  
The touch that seemed as magic to vanquish  
foolish fears—  
I put them all together just to find when that  
is done,  
That the whole of all those blessings was con-  
centered in Just One.

Idly dreaming of the future with its castles  
reared in Spain,  
And the great things ready, waiting, at the  
turning of the lane,



## KATE, *and Other Poems*

All the horde of worldly treasure—wealth, suc-  
cess, renown and fame,  
Help to fellowman accomplished, blessings  
called upon my name,  
Peace and quiet, rest and comfort, after days  
of tiring care,  
Grief and sorrow all forgotten; earthly burdens  
—none to bear,  
Dreaming 'til at last I waken to reflect my  
thoughts have run,  
Down the path of idle fancy, to concenter in  
Just One.

Tasks await a living present, full of action, full  
of strife,  
Past forgotten, future buried in the grave im-  
port of life,  
Paths beset with countless duties to be met and  
mastered well,  
Hearts to comfort, wounds for dressing, tales  
of love again to tell,  
Griefs to grapple, lives to rescue, from the grim  
and gaunt despair,  
Wrongs to right, keen hurts to pardon, injuries  
I need repair,

KATE, *and Other Poems*

These were easier done—I know it, let it be  
impugned by none—  
When the goad to stronger effort is concentrated  
in Just One.

Summing up life's aims, achievements, hopes  
and fears, rejoicings, woe,  
All the feelings, blithe or bitter, that the human  
mind may know,  
I have found where'er I wander, lordly palace,  
humble cot,  
That no heart is wholly selfish, self aggrandize-  
ment is not  
That which feeds the fires of feeling, breeds in-  
centive strong to do  
Worthy things in the great masses, retrogres-  
sion in the few;  
Every being's aspiration 'til the course of life  
is run—  
Though the friends may number legion—is con-  
centered in Just One. |

## A Toast

(Given at a meeting of "The Leap-year Club")

SEVEN saucy spinsters,  
Friday, foul or fair.  
Mean, marauding, mankind's  
Receptions rarely rare.  
Gossip given "Go-by,"  
Drabble-drawing, drub!  
Friendly fellow-feeling,  
THE LEAP-YEAR CLUB.

## A Toast on Cheese

(By Request)

SHERMANY vas here alretty  
Mit a taste for toast on sheese,  
Which vas goot as der limberger,  
Mit the honey from der pees,  
And der honey from der red lips  
Of der maid of "Highland Fling"  
And der maid of "Dyke und vater"  
Which der winds of Holland bring.  
But der best vat ish of dishés—  
As der Sherman one egrees—  
Vas der sauer-kraut und veenie,  
Und der goot limberger sheese.

## A Toast on "Dates"

(By Request)

**A**S I've been told, dates grow on trees,  
Some place in tropic climes,  
And flourish there through all the year,  
Just picked at stated times.  
But dates I've know were grown right here,  
Results of kindly Fate;  
And these I like the best of all,  
Here's to the Iowa date!





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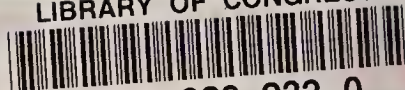
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